RESTORATION REVIEW

THE NEW FREEDOM

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There is the story of the old slave who was being auctioned off, but there were no bidders since he was now worn out from long years in the field and of little value. But one plantation owner had compassion for the old and gentle slave and paid the necessary money to make him his property. Then he said to him: "You've worked long enough and hard enough for any one man. I'm setting you free. Go, you're a free man." The old Negro could hardly believe his ears, and deep inside him he had a feeling that he had never had before as he watched his emancipator walk away. Running after him, he cried out: "Wait, master, I *want* to be your slave!"

Even though he was still a slave, as he had been all his life, the relationship was vastly different. Now his servitude was voluntary. His bondage was a matter of his own will, not that of another.

From the very first page of the Bible the Lord has made it a principle that man is to have dominion, but it is not a dominion *over others.* Man is to harness the powers of the earth and of the animal kingdom for his own good and for the glory of God. But he is not to harness his fellow men. When a man allows himself to be under the dominion of any man, thus surrendering his God-given personal liberty, he sacrifices his dignity as a person. So does the person who demands that others look to him as sovereign. Each man is to be the manager of his own life. It is a sacred trust.

The beauty of the Christian religion is that it never imposes itself on anyone. To the extent that it does to that extent it is corrupted. The painting of Jesus knocking on a closed door, with no latch on the *outside* of the door, beautifully illustrates this truth. Jesus may seek to be a *constraining* influence in men's lives, but not a *restraining* influence. As the scripture above indicates, those who become slaves to Christ are in voluntary servitude, which is the highest expression of freedom.

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In *A Book of Protestant Saints*, Ernest Gordon tells the story of Mathilda Wrede, a woman of station and wealth, who became "Angel of the Prisons" in that she carried the message of Christ to men doomed to spend their lives behind bars. A governor's daughter and a woman of wealth, Miss Wrede chose a life as bare as that of the prisoners themselves in her chosen ministry. Her dress was the simplest, her food hardly ever more than soup and crusts of bread, and her wealth turned to poverty as she gave her all to the

poor. When only 20 she went to the chief of prisons in Finland and asked for permission to visit prisoners all across that nation. For 40 years she fulfilled her ministry, living as simply as the prisoners themselves, which they knew, thus identifying herself with them.

Though Miss Wrede was a free woman she chose a ministry that made her a prisoner for Jesus' sake. She was like Paul in this regard: "I am a free man and own no master; but I have made myself every man's servant, to win over as many as possible" (1 Cor. 9:19) It is only the free man who can say, "I made myself like one of them," in order to be a blessing to them.

This is the new freedom that man can enjoy only in Christ. The true libertarian is he who through Christ is disciplined in the wise restraints. The same Paul who asserted that he was indeed a free man, along with all the rights that *implies,* also said: "But I have availed myself of no such right. On the contrary, I put up with all that comes my way rather than offer any hindrance to the gospel of Christ" (1 Cor. 9:12). This is the disciplined life: doing what one does not have to do, restraining from what one is free to do. This is the test the apostle places upon freedom in 1 Cor. 8. Though a saint is free to eat meat he must be careful and not use his liberty in a way that wounds his brother's conscience. Paul tells us he would not do such as long as the world stands. This is the truth that our traffic safety folk are appealing to in urging that *Right of way is something to give, not to demand.*

There is the story of an accomplished musician who was showing tourists through the home of the great Mendelssohn. When he pointed to the master's piano where he had done much of his composing, a young woman in the group urged the guide to play a few bars. When he refused, explaining he could not bring himself to sit where Mendelssohn sat, the girl showed her shallowness by sitting down herself and dashing off a few notes of some ditty. It is obvious enough that the freest of the two was the one who showed restraint.

Freedom in Christ is the liberty to realize one's potential according to the will of God. It is to recognize that just as God made us different he expects us to serve him according to our own unique selves. Freedom is not only the liberty to be different, but also the liberty to allow the other person to be different from ourselves. Since, as the text with which we began indicates, the freedman in Christ is one who voluntarily accepts bondage in order to serve God more gloriously, he is one who will conform as much as conscience will allow, and he will not insist on being different just to be different. The man who conforms when he can is freer than the one who *has* to be different. And the man who cannot stand for others to be different from himself is far from the liberty that is in Christ.

Christian freedom delivers us from that carnal habit of passing judgment on others. It is a terrible burden to have to serve as judge in the lives of others, determining their loyalty or disloyalty, soundness or unsoundness. Jesus lifts this from us, allowing us such freedom that we do not even have to judge ourselves. Paul puts it this way: "For my part, if I am

called to account by you or by any human court of judgment, it does not matter to me in the least. Why, I do not even pass judgment on myself, for I have nothing on my conscience" (1 Cor. 4:3). He goes on to say, "My judge is the Lord," a truth that would liberate us from many foibles, if we would but give heed.

Freedom in Christ is not only liberty *to* but also liberty *from*, which may be the most important aspect of all. In saying that "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," Jesus must have had in mind freedom *from.* Freedom from sin, to be sure. And freedom from ignorance. It should also mean freedom from dogmatism and authoritarianism. And bigotry and selfishness and pride. It seems that in these respects the most religious people are often less free than those of the world.

A recent study reported in *Psychology Today* indicates as much. Part of the conclusion is: "Most disturbing are findings that show that the religiously devout are on the average more bigoted, more authoritarian, more dogmatic, and more anti-humanitarian than the less devout." The report also claims that church members are more prejudiced than other people.

Most of us will admit that we have seen more of this than we like to admit, some of which has been in our own lives. We need not try to answer the question as to *why* good church members are often more prejudiced, dogmatic, and bigoted than others. It is enough for us to insist that it should not be so, and that church members may well be in need of the freedom that is in Christ. If these things are true of professed Christians, then it is also true that they are less free than other people. Such as this caused Paul to write: "You, my friends, were called to be free men; only do not turn your freedom into license for your lower nature, but be servants to one another in love." (Gal. 5:13)

Notice that Paul equates being free men to being servants to one another in love. The free man in Christ is a man in love. He is ruled by love rather than those passions that give way to prejudice and bigotry. 1 Pet. 2:16 puts it this way: "Live as free men; not however as though your freedom were there to provide a screen for wrong-doing, but as slaves in God's service."

This is the new freedom that is realized only in Christ: *becoming free by becoming a slave.* It is saving one's life by losing one's life. It was not so under the old dispensation, and certainly it is an idea that defies all logic, as well as the wisdom of the Greeks and Romans. The world associates freedom with that liberation that knows no restraint. One cannot be half slave and half free, says the wisdom of this world. But in Christ he who is fully slave is the one who is wholly free. When one's life is "hid with Christ in God," a suitable metaphor to describe Christian liberty, he is then free to serve humanity in a way acceptable to God.

It is the Jerusalem that is above that is our mother and that is *free,* says Paul in Gal. 4:26. This makes possible the New Humanity. The contrast in Heb. 12 is bold and definite. There is that religion that makes men fearful. It is represented as "darkness, gloom, whirlwind, and trumpet blast." Such was God's only alternative when the Hebrews rejected the ministry of freedom that he intended to give them. Even Moses was so appalled by the sight that he said "I shudder with fear."

But the revelation of God was soon pointing to Christ, when something very different would come to bless mankind. Through him the community of heaven would be given the ministry of reconciliation, based on love rather than fear, in which every man could respond to God both by his own choice and according to his own individuality. It was not by birth as under the old dispensation, but by the *new* birth.

We now stand before Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and in him there is no cause for fear. Through love he makes us servants of one another, and if the Christ makes us free we are free indeed.—*the Editor*

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WHAT WE MEAN BY UNITY

It is an honor for me to take part in the forum with men who come from several different backgrounds of the Restoration Movement. Despite any differences there may be between us, I love these men and cherish them as my brothers in Christ, as I do all of you. I am thankful to God for each one of you, that you are willing to attend a meeting of this kind and make some contribution toward the fulfillment of the Lord's prayer that his people be one. Our presence here today is a testimonial that we recognize that even though we have differences we are one body in Christ, and that there is but one brotherhood.

A meeting of this kind makes it appropriate that we state exactly what we mean by Christian unity, that we attempt a precise definition. Some seem to have the idea that forums of this kind imply that there is to be some measure of compromise of truth in order to achieve unity. Or they suppose that we are saying that differences are to be ignored, or error is to be overlooked, or doctrine is to be minimized. My understanding of unity in Christ implies none of these things, No one participating in these meetings is asked to compromise any truth he may have, and anyone who has attended these forums will testify that no effort is made to ignore our doctrinal differences. To the contrary there is free and open discussion on all relevant subjects, with no holds barred.

Our conviction is rather that there is a relationship between love, togetherness, mutual involvement, and unity. In passed decades we have had too little contact with each other, too little love, and far too much belligerence. These are efforts to reestablish lines of

communication, to be together more, to discuss problems in an atmosphere of love. There is reason to believe that we will fall in love with each other if we give the Holy Spirit a chance to catch us together!

All this has to do with what we mean by unity. But let's try a precise definition: *Christian unity is that oneness that men experience together in Christ that transcends all differences of age, sex, race, color, opinion and temperament, and which makes possible the sharing of the common life in Jesus, which is the fellowship of the saints.*

This implies that there is a *relationship* which men share as disciples of Christ, a relationship that breaks down all barriers that would keep them separated from each other. This is the force of Gal. 3:27-28: "As many of you as were baptized in Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

The point is that in Christ there is unity in diversity: whether black or white, rich or poor, educated or uneducated, right or wrong, we are one in Christ.

I trust the last point will not disturb you: that whether right or wrong there is still unity. This is the picture we get from the scriptures. To those very Galatians, who were so erroneous in some of their views that Paul refers to them as "Oh, you foolish Galatians," he asserts that "You are all one in Christ Jesus." And to the Corinthians, the congregation with many errors, Paul writes: "You are the body of Christ and individually members of it." So it was with those grand apostles, Peter and Paul, who had such differences that they could well have begun separate churches. Paul says of Peter: "I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned," and Peter says of Paul that he wrote many things that are difficult to understand. But despite the problem of one being wrong and the other ambiguous they were brothers together in Christ.

It is important, therefore, that we recognize that unity is not the same thing as conformity. It is unlikely that either Peter or Paul conformed to the viewpoint of the other. Yet they were "like-minded" in that they loved and served Christ together. This is unity. So it was with the primitive congregations. Antioch was far from being like Jerusalem, and thank God for the difference! Ephesus was not like Rome, nor was Thessalonica like Corinth. Still they were one in Christ. The admonition to "Preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" was therefore consistent with the nature of primitive Christianity, which was united in its diversity. Conformity of opinion was never made a condition of fellowship.

There was error in all these churches, and Paul was adamant in his efforts to set things aright. But it is clear that, even while criticizing them in the things that were wrong, he regarded them all as his brothers and as one in Christ. Since they were "right" in what mattered most, their relationship to Christ, fellowship was a reality despite doctrinal shortcomings.

This shows that it is not so much a matter of whether a brother is "in error;' for we are all "in error" in one way or another. It is the nature of the error that is important. If people are wrong in their relationship to Christ and are therefore not truly "in Christ," then of course there can be no unity with such ones.

If the congregation at Jerusalem could have its liberals and conservatives, if Corinth could have those who ate meats sacrificed to idols and those who would not, and if Rome could have its carnivore and its vegetarians, all without a breach of fellowship, then why cannot we have our "organic" churches and our "inorganic" churches, our Sunday School churches and our non-Sunday School churches, our premill and amill, and all the rest, and still "preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?"

It is as natural and inevitable that we see things differently as it is that we look different. What a drab existence it would be if we all looked alike! It would be equally unexciting if our interpretations and opinions were all the same, if we were but carbon copies of each other. The scriptures teach us' that man sharpens man, just as iron sharpens iron. But sparks fly when things are sharpened, and we will never hone each other into the fine instruments that God wants us to be without a conflict of ideas.

We are a little inconsistent in our demand for conformity of viewpoint. In each segment of the brotherhood represented here today there are sharp differences of interpretation over such questions as marriage and divorce, participation in warfare, membership in the Masonic Lodge, dancing and card-playing, and back before the days of TV we had our arguments about the movies! If a congregation can have such differences as these and still be united, why must we divide over such questions as the millennium, how the Lord's Supper is to be served, or whether a piano is used in the singing.

It is important to my thesis that a clear distinction be drawn between endorsement and fellowship. The honored brethren who are on this program hold positions that I do not endorse. Instrumental music is one of them. Programs that make for a clergy among us, such as the pastor system and the maintenance of seminaries, however disguised, are others. These practices are wrong, or at least they would be for me. While I do not *endorse* instrumental music or the pastor system, this in no wise effects the love that I have for my brothers who have these things, nor does it nullify the fellowship that we can enjoy together as brothers.

Once we see that unity and fellowship are possible even when there are practices that we cannot endorse, it will no longer be necessary for us to try to impose our own interpretations upon the other fellow, thus denying him of his liberty in Christ. One of the brothers who speaks on this program tomorrow night is a good illustration of this principle, for he holds a view that is different from all the rest of us. We all have a practice that he believes to be wrong in that we have a plurality of cups for the Lord's Supper. He also holds the view that when the church assembles to study the word it should not

fragment itself into classes, a position that is shared by the hundreds of main-line non-class churches that do have individual cups. So this represents a division among the non-class brethren, who number upwards of a thousand congregations among the non-instrument Churches of Christ.

So here is a brother representing a group among us that opposes something that all the rest of us practice, and he is willing to come among us and talk about the unity of the church. Our habit has been to dub a brother like this a *fanatic* when he opposes what we have, but when he practices what we oppose we call him a *hobbyist.* We should see the brother as a man for whom Christ died, and recognize that he is free in Christ to be different from ourselves. It is wrong for us to poke fun at these people when they choose to drink from one cup, such as to joke about how we try to find a seat on the front row when we happen to wander into such a church, lest we be contaminated with someone's germs. Who among us supposes that Jesus would mind drinking after him? Maybe these brethren love one another so much that they don't pay any mind to germs. And, besides, are they not right about our cups being a modern innovation?

We ought to be ashamed, quarreling as we have and poking fun at one another, shedding fratricidal blood, and wasting our time over peripheral issues while a troubled world lies fragmented before us. Whether one cup or many, we must learn to bear with each other, and refrain from imposing our views on one another. Preferences about cups and classes and all the rest may keep us in separate congregations, but that does not keep us from being a united people, enjoying fellowship together in the many areas where it can find expression.

We must all realize that those who differ with us are just as reasonable and intelligent as we are. They believe in the authority of the Bible just as we do, and they are certainly as conscientious as we are, and love Jesus just as we do. Awhile back I took a professor friend of mine of the non-instrument, Sunday School Church of Christ to meet two other professors at a restaurant in a Dallas hotel. It was apparent to him that these men, like himself, were responsible scholars in their respective fields, academic leaders, refined and cultured Christian gentlemen and Ph.D.'s. Once we were to ourselves again, he seemed surprised when I informed him that these men were of the non-class Church of Christ.

We must stop this talk about our differences being caused over whether one believes in the authority of the scriptures. All the men on this program believe in the authority of the Bible, as do the people they represent. Louis Cochran properly refers to us all in the Restoration Movement as *Captives of the Word.* The problem is not a question of who believes the Bible the most. The problem is that throughout most of our history as a people, which has brought division on top of division, we have insisted that the other fellow interpret the scriptures, which we all accept as authoritative, the same way we do.

We have made our own opinions as to what the scriptures say about muted questions tests of fellowship.

You notice I said "muted questions." Is it. not remarkable that all these things that separate us into 20-odd parties are matters upon which the scriptures are silent. What do the New Covenant scriptures say about instrumental music, *pro* or *con?* Or about classes, cups, colleges, literature, or how to serve the Supper or do missionary work? And how about questions of prophecy, military service, divorce, striking and demonstrating, etc. Is there not ground for honest differences of opinion in such matters, since the Bible says either nothing or very little about them?

The wise observation of Willis Whitney is appropriate here: "Men who know algebra never fight over an algebraic equation. It works or it doesn't, and the most belligerent man bows his head before the correct answer. Men fight over what they do not know—misunderstandings—and never over what they do know."

Unfortunately interpreting the Bible is very different from solving algebraic problems. Still there is that large area of biblical information concerning which there is little or no disagreement. It is the area of the known, the factual. It is our opinions—what we don't know for sure—that we bind up on one another, thereby imposing a law that God never made and denying one of his freedom in Christ.

This means that we must not only interpret what the scriptures say, but the *silence* of the scriptures as well. The Bible is silent upon a thousand matters that relate to our life and work in the church. So *how* are we going to interpret the silence of the Bible?

Quite obviously there must be liberty if there is to be peace. Some of us are going to be strict-constructionists, seeing the Bible as a kind of blueprint. Such a one must wring from some nook or corner of the scriptures something that looks like the detail that he is searching for. If it is a question of where the church is to meet, he may come up with the view that it must be in an upper room. If it is how to do missionary work, then he finds some pattern of congregational cooperation, or by going another direction he finds justification for the idea that each congregation must remain independent in all such work. If it is how to select elders, he finds something somewhere that gibes with what seems appropriate. He manages to find book, chapter, and verse for his pragmatism!

Others of us will interpret scriptural silence less strictly, but we must show charity to our strict-constructionist brother and allow him his liberty in Christ. If he believes he should go upstairs to meet, then upstairs let him go. We might even go along with him sometime, just to show him how much we love him. But he too must reverence our freedom in Christ and allow us to meet downstairs or in a building of our own, even when he can't conscientiously join us. But still we can work together for Jesus' sake in helping the man out there who is in trouble, who may be black as well as poor, a Baptist as well as hungry.

We must have less name-calling and labeling of one another. The body of Christ need not have conservatives and liberals, loyal and disloyal, faithful and digressive, or those who accept the authority of the Bible and those who don't. It is wise to note that a *liberal* is one who is more liberal than you are! Everyone here, I venture to say, is a *liberal* to somebody, somewhere.

My view of the nature of unity is that here in Lubbock we can have all groups of the Restoration Movement represented, with each doing the Lord's work according to its own conscience, and still be a united people. We can recognize and treat each other as brothers, visit each other's assemblies, occasionally exchange preachers, arrange joint meetings for the young people, visit in each other's homes, and find ways to work together where no one is asked to compromise any conviction.

I am thankful that in some respects this is already the case right here in Lubbock. When the tornado struck this area a few weeks ago, the body of Christ in Lubbock arose to the occasion. When people are lying in the street injured and hundreds are homeless, things like cups and classes, millennial theories and Herald of Truth *pro* or *con* make little difference. Unity is a precious reality, like oil upon the beard of Aaron, when we work together in binding up the wounds of our fellow men. When we are all cut to the heart over suffering humanity and resolve to combine our resources and work together ro make men whole, then we will see fellowship in the light that God intended.

The young men who go from our various groups to battlefields across the sea sometimes have this experience, men who see children starving, men dying, land ravished, homes destroyed. When they are able to get together and take the Lord's Supper in some bunker, they aren't bothered about who has a piano in his church back home or whether somebody's church contributes to Herald of Truth.

We must somehow get on the inside of this problem of the authority of the scriptures in relation to unity. When I was at Harvard, which will qualify as *liberal* in our circles, I would say, I was dubbed by my class-mates as "the conservative of the conservatives." Later I was to be described in our brotherhood papers as some-thing of "a liberal of the liberals." So it all depends on where one is standing as to what a label might mean. A Harvard professor onetime disturbed me with this statement: "Mr. Garrett, if you ever find anyone more conservative than yourself, you ought to examine his position."

This is an appropriate challenge for those of us whose reference is the authority of the scriptures. Suppose, for instance, some brother asks you for the scriptural authority for a congregation owning real estate and maintaining a church plant. "I can read about 'the church in thy house'," he might say in defense of his house-church, "but I can't find scripture for all your real estate holdings." What would you say? You see, he is to your *right,* more conservative than you are. He points to the Bible for what he does, leaving you

with the Bible's silence. Does that mean he believes in the authority of the scriptures more than you do?

Suppose a brother has foot-washing in his church, and he refers to John 13 where there is both a command and an example for such a practice. He reads where Jesus says: "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." He does that. You don't. Does he have the right to say you don't accept the authority of the scriptures? On this subject the Bible is not silent at all, but we manage to interpret in such a way as to satisfy our practice. So who is the *liberal* and who believes in the authority of the scriptures?

So our problem is not a question of who loves Jesus the most, or who honors truth more, or who has greater respect for the Bible. It is a question as to who is to be the final arbiter in matters of interpretation. The assertion that "The Bible means what it says" helps none at all, for each of us has his own idea as to what the Bible says, or does not say. So, who is to be the Supreme Court in matters of biblical interpretation? Shall we leave it to Abilene or Amarillo, Lufkin or Nashville?

The final arbiter in matters upon which we differ must be each man's conscience before God. This is where the Bible places it: "Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls" (Rom. 14:4). The Bible is the authority, yes, but each man must decide for himself what God is saying to him through scripture. This reduces the matter to his own conscience as the Supreme Court.

There is no other way to resolve our differences than to accept each other through love as we are, with our differences. So I accept each of you as my brothers, not because we see eye-to-eye on everything in the Bible, but because you are in Christ. If Paul could resolve the differences in the church at Rome with a "To each his own" approach, then so can we. Then once we accept each other *with our differences*, we will then be in a better position to talk out any of the problems that place a strain upon the fellowship.

Let's not wait until we are agreed on everything before we get together. Let's get together and declare that the church is one, and in that spirit of fellowship we can try to work out the differences.

In our study of the nature of unity we must realize that unity is not man's work at all, whether by ecumenical councils or papal decrees or by meetings like this; but it is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. We can only hope that in such efforts as these God's Spirit will use us as a healing hand to restore health to our fragmented brotherhood. But it must be his creation, not our genius.

We must also see unity as a means to something beyond rather than as an end in itself. "I pray that they may all be one," prayed the Master, "so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." If the world is to be *won*, then we must be *one*.

There may be mystery to the oneness for which Christ prayed, but it is a mystery that we experience in other ways, such as in marriage. The marital bond is not predicated upon conformity of viewpoint. None of us could enjoy fellowship with his own wife if it were dependent on seeing everything alike. Marriage is one of those miracles of unity in diversity, as is all nature.

So it is with the family into which we are born. We do not choose our brothers and sisters. We take what the Lord gives us and go on the best we can. Those of us who come from big families know that the differences usually outnumber the agreements and that quarrels are commonplace. But that doesn't break up the family nor destroy brotherhood. It is love that holds us together and makes us one. It is when love fails that separations come. There isn't a married couple in this building that could not start divorce proceedings tomorrow if they wanted to, for they could find enough differences. It is love that keeps people married just as it is love that makes God's people stay together. It is when they quit loving that they start dividing.

Unity and love are thus irrevocably tied together. They are twin gifts of the Holy Spirit. When we allow God's love to be poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, the task of preserving the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace will take care of itself. When love once more rules our hearts and minds, when Jesus is enthroned rather than our sectarian pride, then we will "with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 15:6) and thus be a blessing to the world.

(This essay was prepared for the Fifth Annual Unity Forum, Lubbock, Texas, July 2-4, 1970.)

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WINNING THE WAR WITHIN

We are all too aware of the conflict that rages within us, a war between our lower and higher natures. The problem is how to handle such a war, how to win out over all that is working against us deep down inside. No one is more sensitive to this problem than was the apostle Paul himself. One can feel his agony as he writes: "I do not even acknowledge my own actions as mine, for what I do is not what I want to do, but what I detest." Most of us have lived long enough to be able to identify with such distress without difficulty. The good news is that Paul not only describes so well the nagging conflicts within us, but he points the way to victory.

He goes on in Rom. 7 to write about this warfare as a law or principle: "I discover this principle, then: that when I want to do the right, only the wrong is within my reach. In my inmost self I delight in the law of God, but I perceive that there is in my bodily members a

different law, fighting against the law that my reason approves and making me a prisoner under the law that is in my members, the law of sin."

By calling this a *principle* the apostle must mean that this is simply the way man is. We speak of gravity as a principle or law because the earth has behaved this way for so long. And so human nature has had certain general characteristics for so long that we can speak of them as laws. The implication is that it can be no other way: a *law* is at work within us and that's that. No one escapes. We can all say at one time or another: "I do not even acknowledge my own actions as mine." The intensity may vary from one to another, but we are all at war to some degree within ourselves.

The nature of this conflict within man has been a subject of concern to philosophers since the time of Plato, who described man's nature as being like two mighty steeds before a chariot, who might dart off in different directions at any moment if they are not properly controlled. The controlling force is man's reason, typified by the charioteer standing strong with reins in hand. But Plato learned, as did the Stoics who taught his doctrine of self-discipline, that the war within man is not so simply quieted as that. Aristotle and the Epicureans who came after him turned to "the happiness theory," with stress on intellectual delights, as the answer to man's dilemma. If he can find "the golden mean," the life of moderation and contentment, then there will be inner harmony. But they too discovered that the war within man is indeed a *law,* as Paul was later to describe it, and that it could not be made inviolable by human ingenuity.

After a few centuries man's effort to resolve the conflict went under ground, so to speak, in that the attempt to resolve it was by indirection. Monasticism was a form of asceticism, which is an effort to control the forces within by either denying, ignoring, or destroying them. This is sometimes done through such extreme measures as flagellation, by sleeping on sharp objects, wearing inadequate clothing in inclement weather, and subsisting on bread and water. Luther was going through all this when he rebelled against such futility and found inspiration in that great passage "The just shall live by faith:' He saw it as "faith *only,"* and within the context of his experience he was right, for justification is by faith only, apart from any such works as man may devise.

So Monasticism, with all its attainments in scholarship and the disciplines of the soul, was like a broken tooth as a solution to the war within. The more the monks punished themselves the more apparent it became that such efforts only intensify the problem.

Modern philosophers are content to accept man's condition as they find it. They join the psychologists in trying to describe it, but there are few who venture any kind of solution. They use such language as "What a chimera is man! what a confused chaos! what a subject of contradiction!" (Pascal) and "Man is a fallen god" (de Lamartine), but there is no real answer to the problem. The existentialists see it all as absurd and tragic, but offer no solution other than that man must learn to accept his fate.

Studdert Kennedy's lines are appropriate:

I'm a man and a man's mixture
Right down from his very birth;
For part of him comes from heaven,
And part of him comes from earth.

Rhinhold Niebhur is thinking this way when he sees man as a strange mixture of both good and evil, while Nels Ferre, another of our contemporaries, describes man as having "the drag of evil upon him" despite all his noble impulses. It is the answer itself that nobody comes up with. That we are a strange specie, filled with all sorts of contradictions, is apparent enough. What to do about it is something else.

But the apostle Paul had an answer, that's for sure, and there is no indication that it came easily. "Miserable creature that I am, who is there to rescue me out of this body doomed to death?," he cries out in his despair. His answer: "God alone, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Thanks be to God!" He goes on to assure us that there is victory through God's Spirit: "If by the Spirit you put to death all the base pursuits of the body, then you will live." Paul learned that man cannot win the war within alone, but if we are led by the Spirit there will be victory.

This is the force of Gal. 5:16-17, where the war within is set forth as a crucial struggle between flesh and Spirit. "If you are guided by the Spirit you will not fulfill the desires of your lower nature. That nature sets its desires against the Spirit, while the Spirit fights against it. They are in conflict with one another, so that what you will to do you cannot do."

There can be no question but what there is an evil force within us. Whether Calvin was right in identifying this as inherent sin is questionable. It is enough to recognize it as *the pull of our lower nature.* Calvin could hardly have been right about his notion of "*total* hereditary depravity," for there is also evident within us, at least within the Christian, *the pull of the Spirit.* Thus the warfare with antagonizing forces pulling against each other. Paul is employing a military metaphor in that he has the opposing forces *entrenched,* as if they are settled down for a long struggle.

Our task is to somehow suppress the demands of the lower nature and follow the promptings of God's Spirit. We surely have something to do with the results of the conflict, for we cannot simply turn it over to the Spirit. The point is that the Spirit helps us, encouraging us and providing the necessary resources of strength. It is like a tug of war with the Spirit coming to pull on our side.

Victory really becomes a matter of will. What do we really want? If one *really* desires righteousness, he shall be filled. The Lord promises this. If we want a victorious Christian life, God will make it so. If we want to follow, the Spirit will lead. The crux of it all is

whether we love our sins so well that we do not want to turn loose. And the basis of all our sin, remember, is our own vanity and pride.

The problem of dealing with our lower nature is illustrated in the story from Greek mythology. There is the tale of the sirens, beautiful but evil women, who lived on a rocky island. They sang beautiful songs that were irresistible to passing sailors, who were lured to their death upon the rocks. Only two ships ever managed to escape the trap of the sirens as they sang. One was Ulysses, who stopped up the ears of his men with wax so that they could not hear the beautiful and mysterious singing, and who had his men to bind him to the mast of the ship so that he would not be tempted to go. As Ulysses passed the island he was almost beside himself in his desire to go to the women, but he was bound and his sailors could not hear his cries as they could not hear the women. His ship passed on in safety.

The other was Orpheus, who was a great musician. As his ship approached the sirens he gave instructions that his men should listen to him play upon the flute rather than to the women. But the men found to their astonishment that they did not care to listen to the sirens when Orpheus played so elegantly, and they sailed on in contentment.

Many of us are like Ulysses. It is a teeth-gritting exercise to refrain from the desires of our carnal self. Despite our mad desire we sometimes manage to sweat it out and abstain. It is different in the case of Orpheus, for the men found a new affection in the music of their captain and had no desire for whatever the sirens had to offer. This illustrates the impulsive power of a new affection. Once we really love Jesus and hunger for his righteousness, the allurements of the vain world grow dim in their attraction.—*the Editor*

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WHAT IS RIGHT WITH CHURCHES OF CHRIST

A college student turned in a paper to his sociology professor on “What’s Wrong with America.” The professor gave the student a good grade for his effort and then wrote a note on the essay that read: “Now write another essay and show what’s right with America.”

While it is appropriate that editors of religious journals make criticism a way of life, it is possible that we spend too much time with the negative. Too often we see only part of what Jeremiah saw in the whole. God told the prophet that he was “To tear up and to knock down, To destroy and to overthrow;” but he also told him “To build and to plant.” Jeremiah may have been a prophet of doom, even “the weeping prophet,” but he was also a confirmed optimist. In his letter to the exiles in Babylon he wrote of “plans for peace, not disaster,” and he tells how the Lord promises “I will bring you back to the place from

which I exiled you." And who can be more optimistic than Jeremiah, when, with Nebuchadnezzar's army at Jerusalem's gates and with himself in prison, he buys a field as a testimonial that God will yet act in history and return his people to Jerusalem where they will once more "buy fields, pay money, draw up deeds?"

We do not apologize for criticizing. The Lord knows we need more of it than we get! We are only saying that we must not lose sight of the good in our efforts to expose the evil. When we start listing the things that are wrong, it seems unending perhaps. But it is equally true that a list of what we believe to be right also grows lengthy. There is a subtle implication in the work of any reformer that he believes there is potentially more good than evil in what concerns him or he would not busy himself as he does. What man in his right mind would waste effort on a cause which he considers hopeless? Like Jeremiah, any reformer believes that there is hope, that there is more good than evil, and that victory is altogether possible.

The sincere and informed critic realizes that what is right, however much there is, is doomed for the scaffold if concerned people remain silent. Evil is determined to bury the good in silence. So the critic's role is to confront the evil so as to give the good its chance. But this should cause the critic to be aware of the good and appreciative of it.

Those who serve us through criticism, and we include ourselves here, must realize that there are serious hazards in such a ministry. Perpetual declaiming is boring and tiresome. It soon seals all ears, and before long the calamity howlers are all lined up crying on each other's shoulders and nobody paying them any mind. So reformers have a way of being right in their philosophy but blundering in their tactical errors.

As we look at what is right about those of us associated with Churches of Christ, it may be helpful that we realize that the problem of good and evil among us is very much as it is generally. Wrong is more glaring than the right because it is exceptional. It is the bad that makes news in any newspaper or telecast, for the good is commonplace. You will read of no reports of *honest* bank tellers, but only of the embezzlers. The TV newscast will make no mention of the vast majority of law-abiding citizens, which includes 98 % of the teenagers, but of hippie gangs, dope pushers, and purse-snatchers. It is a compliment to our society that evil things make news. The preacher who runs off with his secretary and plays the wheels at Reno makes news only because the vast majority of them live exemplary lives. Wrong is seen. Right is not. It is taken for granted.

In detailing what is good about us it would be improper to suggest that it is only ourselves that have such good. Indeed there is much more good about the entire religious world than there is bad. It minimizes no good that we may have achieved to concede the same to others. Yet there are things about the Churches of Christ that I believe to be distinctly praiseworthy. They are the reasons why I prefer to remain with the church of my youth.

The Churches of Christ are, first of all, made up of good and wonderful people. Surely many of the finest folk in the world are in our congregations. I refer to the old-fashioned virtues that have long characterized the best of middle America. Veracity, integrity, industry, and reliability are the rule rather than the exception. We believe in the sanctity of marriage and the sacredness of the home. More than ordinary effort is made toward bringing our children up to reverence God and respect their fellow man. Kindness, compassion, and hospitality are as marked among our people as any group I know.

We are, moreover, a deeply religious people. We take our spiritual responsibilities more seriously than most. We honor the authority of the scriptures, love Bible-centered preaching, and cherish the church as the body of Christ on earth. We sincerely rejoice in the saving of souls, and nothing would please us more than to see the entire world turn to Christ. We give of our time and money to a degree that testifies to the sincerity of our profession.

While any people can raise serious questions about whether their love for Jesus is as strong as their love for party, I believe those within Churches of Christ are as intent upon pleasing the Master as any. So many among us are deeply Christ-loving and Christ-dedicated. As weak and sinful as we surely are in many ways, we are still a people that is conscious of the will of God in our lives.

As parochial as we are in some ways, we are still a freedom-loving and liberal-minded folk. There is a strong anti-intellectual element among us, and yet we produce some of the finest minds in the nation. Our colleges are distinctly sectarian in their educational approach (though this is waning), but still one can manage to get himself a first-rate education. We have run off a lot of good minds, true, but we still have many who have refused to leave, which speaks well for us as well as for them. We are yet a frontier people, full of the spirit of adventure, tough-minded and committed to the future. In some ways we try real hard to be little, but in soul we are still big, like the out-of-doors.

Since we are yet a youthful community it is understandable that some of our behavior is immature. What is important is that we are growing. We have fears and uncertainties that do not become us, but there is deep inside us that courage that bears us along to those changes that must come if we are to become the responsible people that we really desire to be.

Noteworthy among recent changes is our growing sense of mission and our concern for the whole man. We are becoming more concerned for suffering humanity and less fearful of “the social gospel” cry. We are indeed beginning to join the human race and to fraternize with the Christian world. We are discovering a deeper understanding of brotherhood. We are these days talking more about Bangkok and Addis Ababa and less about Nashville and Dallas.

We have begun to take the Lord's prayer for unity more seriously. Perhaps we have thus far torn down few walls of separation, but we are at least peering across them and acknowledging that something should be done. One only needs to have experienced the difficulty of putting a unity meeting together just a few years back to realize our growth in this respect. A dramatic illustration of the difference these days is that this year Lubbock Christian College opened its facilities for this year's Annual Unity Forum. A few years ago that same college would not allow one of its faculty to appear on a program at our premill college in Kentucky, whose president, by the way, is on this year's program in Lubbock, along with all sorts of other awful brethren!

All these reasons, along with many more, are why I love our people, why I am Staying around, and why I believe in our future. The simple truth is that we are better than we sound. We believe in the grace of God more than our preaching would suggest, and we love people more than some of our straight-laced emphases would indicate. Now that we are beginning to gain our perspective and see ourselves from a larger frame of reference the chances for our making a substantial contribution to the renewal of modern religion are indeed bright.—*the Editor.*

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READERS' EXCHANGE

Camp Shiloh

Some of our readers are interested in knowing about Christian projects to which they may contribute money from time to time. Such ones have learned that the discipline of stewardship does not come easily and that money is often unwisely invested. One work that appears to us to merit consideration is Shiloh, a Christian outreach for children, Box 627, Mendham, N. J. 07945.

Shiloh ministers to children of the slums and ghettos of the greater New York area. These kids live in the presence of violence, loneliness, and the drug pusher. Started 20 years ago under the leadership of Clinton Davidson, Shiloh has increased the number of children it brings to camp each summer from 50 to 500. The camp consists of 150 wooded acres by a beautiful lake, which is in bold contrast to the crowded, dirty, asphalt jungle of the slums from which the youngsters come. A staff of 100 serves as nurses, counselors, cooks, etc.

In 1966 Shiloh enlarged its ministry by undertaking a follow-up program in the slums themselves so that they might be in contact with the children all year. To help do this they recruit college students who support themselves in order to work in the deprived areas of New York, many of them coming from well-established churches in Texas and Tennessee. In 1968 they had 36 such workers, and the number has increased to 60 this year. To many a kid in the slums a Shiloh worker is the first person ever to take a loving interest in him. Last summer I visited the project in Brooklyn, directed by Bryan Hale, and I was impressed with the way the young people were working with neglected children "at the edge of eternity." I was also impressed with what the experience was doing for the students themselves. It is an effort toward *wholeness,* not only for the kids, but those who minister to them as well.

You can write to Rick Kilgore, who handles public relations, for further information, and your contribution can be sent to him at above address.

Vatican Envoy

It is now common knowledge that President Nixon has selected Henry Cabot Lodge to serve as his personal representative to the Vatican. To those of us who may have misgivings about our nation having any such association with any church, it is helpful to know that this does not establish diplomatic relations with the Vatican. The following paragraphs, which we received from the Department of State in response to a letter we sent the President objecting to the appointment, is interesting reading. Some of us will be surprised to learn that the United States has had diplomatic relations with the Vatican during a large part of its history.

> The United States had consular relations with the Papal States from 1797 to 1890 and diplomatic relations with the Pope in his capacity as head of the Papal States from 1848 to 1868. In 1939 President Roosevelt named Mr. Myron C. Taylor as his Personal Representative to the Holy See with the rank of ambassador. President Truman renewed the appointment in 1947, and Ambassador Taylor served until 1950 when he resigned. His appointment did not constitute the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Vatican.
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> The Vatican maintains an Apostolic Delegate in Washington. He has religious and ecclesiastical duties in connection with relations between the Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. He does not have diplomatic status and is not accredited to the United States Government.

Story from Philippines

Prompted by our piece on "Complexion: Brown," Prof. C. F. Cromwell of Bihar, India sent us this story, which was told to him by Prof. Ramon de la Pena of Hawaii. It is said to be a Filipino legend.

> When God made man he was new at the business, and His oven was new. For his first effort, he took the mold out of the oven too quickly. That one he called white man. For His second effort He left the mold in the oven too long. He called that one black man. The third time he did it just right. He called that one Filipino.

This implies that with most of us it is a matter of whether we were undercooked or overcooked, which is another way of putting us in our place. Anyway, we appreciate the many positive reactions to our articles on race. I am now convinced, if I were not already, that most people don't want to be prejudiced, but are increasingly willing to admit that they have been. Surely this moves us in the right direction.

Revealing Survey

A group of Church of Christ folk out West somewhere recently conducted an interesting survey on how our people have or have not changed in their thinking in this generation. In the process they asked some interesting questions. The person filling out the questionnaire was also to give the viewpoint of his parents and grandparents, as best he understood them. The results indicate an unmistakable move to the left and toward center, or let's just say toward what we would consider a more responsible Christian faith.

In response to the idea that "Only members of the fellowship of the church of Christ will be saved," only three indicated this was their conviction, while 32 said yes to "We must admit the possibility that there are Christians in other groups." But of the 35 that responded almost half of them understood the first viewpoint to be that of their parents and grandparents.

There were 36 who responded to the question as to how preachers ought to preach, and all 36 endorsed the view that "Preachers ought to preach more about God's love and Christian assurance," though 24 of them saw their parents as calling for "Hell-fire and damnation sermons." On the inspiration of the Bible only three of 37 saw it as "dictated word for word," while the other 34 said yes to "The message of the gospel was given to inspired men who wrote in their own language."

Two-thirds of those who responded could count back two, three, or more generations that their family had been in the Church of Christ. Half of them were either in agriculture or business.

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BOOK NOTES

We now have available in one volume the famous commentary by Matthew Henry on the entire Bible, along with Thomas Scott. Alexander Campbell tells how he read the whole of Scott's notes in family devotions. And this is a *devotional* commentary more than a critical one, and it is highly informative. For a book of 1,024 pages it is a giant bargain for only 6.95.

Guy N. Woods has prepared a highly readable and informative 108-page booklet on *How to Read the Greek New Testament.* It is prepared for those unacquainted with Greek, and it helps such a one to be able to locate every word in the Greek New Testament, trace its origin and define it. Even a brisk reading of the little volume provides one with many keen insights into the New Covenant scriptures. We recommend it to you. Write to brother Woods for it at 4921 Edenshire, Memphis, Tenn.

Alger M. Fitch, Jr., of Northwest Christian College, has authored a new work on *Alexander Campbell: Preacher of Reform and Reformer of Preaching.* Use is made of the new sources of information about Campbell that turned up a few years ago in a forgotten trunk on a farm in Australia, especially sermonic materials, for the book is chiefly concerned with Campbell as a preacher. The story is told of how the Australian manuscripts were found and a description is given of their contents, along with photographs, which certainly adds value to the volume. 3.95.

We again have copies of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Heaven* by Gary Freeman. The writer says you'll have to know something about churches and Christian colleges in Texas to appreciate his book, and he admits that a lot of folk will suppose he is "pulling their leg." We first gave notice to this funny book as a parody on Church of Christ religion, but since its publication everybody from Episcopalians and Roman Catholics to Southern Baptists insists that it talks about them. Only 3.95.

But for less ambiguous criticism, and more responsible and helpful, we urge that you read *Voices of Concern: Critical Studies in Church of Christism.* Years from now, we think, this book will be pointed to as the "turning of the corner" in our move toward responsible Christian citizenship. This is one that you owe it to yourself to read. 3.50.

Hazard of the Die is the story of Tolbert Fanning and the Restoration Movement by James R. Wilburn. It is also good Americana, for our history is closely related to the growing-up of our great nation, the Civil War, Reconstruction days, and all the rest. 4.95 in hardcover.

One of the very best story-books for children is *The Child's Story Bible.* We have several copies that are new and look new, though slightly shelf-worn, that we will sell for 4.95, which is 2.00 off regular price. First come, first served basis.

Christians Only by James DeForest Murch is an extended treatment of the Restoration Movement, a most readable and informative volume, and only 3.50 in handsome paperback And if you have such interests you should include Louis and Bess Cochran's important new publication *Captives of the Word,* which is a less-restrained, episode-centered of the men and events that have made up our history. 5.95 in hardcover.

Why Not Try It?

A brother from below the border in Mexico wrote to us as follows: "Finally, after wishing from time to time for several months to see a copy of your paper, a brother from the Midwest has sent me one to read. I read the February issue all the way through this afternoon, and I received a blessing from reading it."

We are always getting letters like this from people who are delighted to discover *Restoration Review,* which happens only when some thoughtful person sends them a copy. Why not help our effort along by sending some copies to those you think would be receptive. We'll do the work if you'll supply the names. You can send the paper for a full year to six people for only $3.00, which is below our cost. Or we'll send you a bundle of back issues that are appropriate to pass out to your friends or include in your personal mail. Ten cents per copy, as many as you can use. If you are eager to do something to help, this is a place to start.

This journal is not published in July and August. The next number will be the September issue. At the close of 1970 this volume number 12 will be issued in permanent book form for only $3.00. Four such volumes are now available, for each of the past four years at only $3.00 each. The subscription rate is $1.00 per year, but we urge you to subscribe or renew for two years at a time. In clubs of 6 or more the rate remains 50 cents each per year.

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